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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated November 22, 2006. Claims 1, 2, and 10-18 were pending, with claims 3-9 having been withdrawn by the Patent Office from consideration and therefore having been previously canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. By this Amendment, claim 18 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 18, and claim 17 has been amended by rewriting the claim in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. It is submitted that no new matter and no new issues have been introduced by the present amendment. Therefore, entry of this amendment is requested. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, and 10-17 are pending upon entry of this Amendment, with claims 1, 10 and 17 being in independent form.

Claims 1, 2 and 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,245,215 to Sawaya in view of WO 01/54047 A1 (Sahota). The Office Action also indicates that claims 17 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, claim 18 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 18. Therefore, claims 1 and 10, and claims depending therefrom, are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons claim 18 would have been allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 17 has been amended by rewriting the claim in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and therefore is submitted to be now

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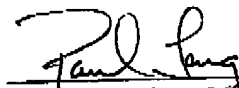
allowable.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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